

GLORIA'S ROMANCE

by MR. and MRS. RUPERT HUGHES

Novelized from the Motion Picture Romance of the same name.

COPYRIGHT, 1916, BY ADELAIDE M. HUGHES



FOURTEENTH INSTALLMENT

SYNOPSIS.

Pierpont Stafford, with his daughter Gloria, is wintering at Palm Beach. Gloria is a vivacious but willful young lady who chafes under the restraining hand of a governess from whom she repeatedly escapes. Her childish capers cause young Doctor Royce to fall in love with her. Becoming lost in the everglades she falls into the hands of the Seminole Indians. Gloria falls in love with her rescuer, Frenau. Five years later she leaves school and meets Frenau at the theater; he has forgotten her. Later Frenau persuades her to forgive him. Gloria's sister-in-law, Lois, becomes intensely jealous and Doctor Royce discovers in her an ally. Frenau grows disenchanted with Gloria. It results in pneumonia for Gloria, whose family becomes incensed at Frenau. Royce is summoned. Frenau's finances being low, he approaches Pierpont Stafford. Doctor Royce warns Frenau of his conduct. Lois threatens him with dire punishment. Her husband, Gloria's brother David, becomes suspicious. Frenau agrees to spend a week with Lois in the Catskills. He plans to have Mulry send Gloria a bunch of telegrams. After Frenau takes leave of Gloria she sees from her window an attack made upon him. Doctor Royce convinces her that what she has seen is the result of delirium. Later a telegram followed by a letter, comes from Mulry and there she sees Lois who is also worried. Gloria's suspicions are aroused. Royce endeavors to show her the difficulty she faces. Gloria goes to David's country home. She meets Mulry who lies at once. Gloria insists on going to Palm Beach. Again she sees Mulry there. He leaves for the North. She is recognized by her one-time captor, the young Indian chief. He tells her that Royce and not Frenau was her rescuer at that time. Gloria attends night court; she sees Mulry there, also the tramp who attacked Frenau. But Judge Freeman releases him. She follows the tramp when he leaves the court and falls into the hands of hold-up men. She finds herself in a low saloon dance hall, and is selected by one of the patrons as his partner. Doctor Royce, however, follows her and when he attempts to rescue her a riot on their heads. The hall is raided and the crowd, including Gloria and Royce, is arrested and taken before Judge Freeman.

The Floating Trap

"Thank heaven, nobody knows of your escape," Pierpont Stafford was just saying to his daughter Gloria. She had declined to be frightened by his scowl and had almost won him to a smile across his breakfast coffee cup when his eyes fell on the headlines of the morning paper. He nearly went over backward. The butler, who was stealing a glimpse of the headlines over his master's shoulder, nearly went over forward.

Pierpont threw the paper down in a rage. Gloria picked it up, and what she read eased her mischievous smile with one whisk. This is what she read:

POLICE NET GLORIA STAFFORD.

Millionaire's Beautiful Daughter, a Recent Debutante, Caught in Raid on East Side Dance Hall.

Dr. Stephen Royce Battered in Brawl.

Gloria was stupefied. She sat in a daze while her father went through the other papers. Equally hateful headlines or worse were in all of them. He pushed them before her. She pushed them to the floor. Then brother David came in, his hat and overcoat still on. He carried a bundle of papers, too. He was furious. Gloria meekly waived him and his papers away.

Pierpont glowered at her. David sat down and glowered at her.

The miserable silence was invaded by the second man who appeared and reported:

"If you please, sir, there's an army of reporters at the door."

Gloria threw up her hands in surrender. David sprang to his feet. Pierpont pushed him back and stalked out in a towering fury. He ordered the newspaper raiders off. They bombarded him with questions. He had to take refuge in the house. He returned to the dining room livid with wrath. He ordered the servants out. He thundered at Gloria.

"Now you see what would have happened if you had told the police about your delirium!"

He stormed on, Gloria trying vainly to break in. At last he was exhausted and she spoke:

"But, daddy, it was no delirium. I saw poor Dick murdered. Last night proved it, for I saw the man who killed him. Why did the judge let him go. Why don't you want him captured?"

Pierpont stared at her, then took her to the window and pointed to the crowd of reporters. He shook the newspapers under her eyes, saying: "My one and only reason for silence is this publicity! It is horrible!"

To one of Gloria's training and position the reporters were almost more perilous than the police. Gloria apologized and tried to soothe her father by promising him that she would lead the most quiet of lives thereafter, though she made the mental reservation that nothing should stop her pursuit of her lover's slayer.

Suddenly she started and pointed out of the window at two forlorn, ragged figures strolling up the drive as if they had wandered from the slums and were lost. They were the waiter, Casimir, and his little boy, Stas, whom Gloria had befriended at the night court. She had forgotten them and now they arrived at the most inopportune moment. Casimir had Gloria's card in his hand. He saw the reporters and grew uneasy. He pushed through and rang the doorbell. Gloria insisted on their admission and greeted them warmly.

Pierpont stared at the labby waiter in disgust. He looked at his watch. He started to go. Gloria nabbed him. She told him that she had promised the waiter a job. Pierpont said he had no jobs for waiters. Then he ordered Gloria to lunch with him at the Bankers' club.

"The very idea," she exclaimed. "Get Casimir a job there."

"In those clothes?" Pierpont exclaimed.

"Buy him a new outfit," was Gloria's solution.

Pierpont was enraged, but she had her way as usual, and he motioned the waiter to come with him. Casimir kissed Gloria's hand. The boy tried to follow him and clung to him in terror. Gloria knelt down and called to the boy. Stas ran to her and let Casimir go with Pierpont.

Gloria led the child to the window. They waved good-by to their two parents, so different in character and estate. Gloria laughed aloud as she saw her father issue from the house with Casimir, brush through the gnatlike reporters, and motion Casimir into his car. She was educating her father to be as democratic as she was.

The boy Stas looked about the room as if he were in heaven and Gloria the winged angel that flew there with him. He threw his arms around

her again lest he fall back to earth. The butler in horror took the boy's dirty hand from Gloria's shoulder and tried to cleanse it on a napkin. It blackened the napkin, but the hand was not visibly bleached.

Gloria laughed, put the boy in a chair at the table, and called for finger bowls. The butler brought two. Gloria called for soap and a towel. This was appalling. The butler almost mutilated. Then she washed the child's hands with soap in the finger bowls. They turned out to be surprisingly white.

She drew a wet towel down his cheek and it left a white canal. She laughed again, but more soberly. She pondered a minute, then made up her mind and motioned to the butler: "Griggs, what he needs is a bath. You may give him one."

Old Griggs muttered and shook his head. Gloria gave him one of the looks she ruled her father with. "Run along now, while I telephone for a complete trousseau for him."

Griggs groaned. Stas did not want to leave Gloria, but she kissed him, carefully selecting the clean streak on his face, and assured him that Griggs was a nice man. She watched while Griggs led the boy by one clean finger to the servant's wing and one of its bathtubs. Then she ran into her own room. She called up her father's tailor,

boy's knees and heels. He was gloriously unhappy.

Gloria ran back to the telephone and resumed negotiations with the clerk. When he had transcribed the numbers, he promised to deliver the goods in a jiffy. A jiffy is a long time to a boy just out of a tub, and when Griggs explained to Gloria that Stas' entire wardrobe consisted of one Turkish towel and two safety pins, she had more thinking to do. She solved the problem by sending her maid to fetch a pair of her silk pajamas.

By and by there was a knock at the door, and Griggs carried in Master Stas. The pajamas were worlds too big for him, but he was almost unrecognizably improved—white and pink with curls of gold and the eyes of a cherub. The laundries do not always send things back better than they went, but Stas had gone out a grimy pauper and he came back a prince. Gloria embraced him, called to the maid for a pair of her satin mules for his bare feet, and took him in her lap and combed his curls. He was her new doll, and she wept a little into those curls to think that she would never have a child of her own.

She remembered her own childhood and the nursery where she and her brother had been indulged in every toy that money could buy or ingenuity invent.

She hastened up to the great room which she had not visited for years. Poor Stas had never had any nursery besides the streets or any toy except some pitiful makeshift. He did not really know how to play. Gloria had to teach him. He was an apt pupil with the horn and the drum. He pounded and blew till Gloria covered her ears. He tried to climb the hobby horse with the drum still on. He got off head first on the other side, but he soon mastered the fierce steed.

His attention was attracted by a picture of Indians on the walls. They were doing a scalp-tango about a white captive. Stas wanted to know all about it. He had thought Gloria an angel before, but she grew still more wonderful when she told him that she herself had been an Indian captive. He seemed to be a trifle disappointed when he learned that she had never been honored by being tied to a stake. She saved herself a little by explaining: "I might have been worse than tied to a

formed him of the boy's bath and its terrible consequences. She made the boy cough for the doctor. Royce did not seem to be as much impressed as Gloria had been. He set the boy to laughing and got him to put out his tongue by making faces at him which the boy mocked. Then he said:

"It's nothing. Just a little tickling in the throat, eh?"

"I guess so," Stas confessed. "I am tickled all over."

He gave the boy a lozenge for medicine and turned to Gloria. She asked him again why he had tried to deceive her about the delirium.

"Why don't you tell me the truth now? What is Lois to you?"

Royce protested that Lois was nothing to him and that a doctor has his secrets—like a priest. Gloria was furious. She gathered up the child and was about to storm out, but she paused, meditated, whirled, and went to him impulsively.

"Forgive me. You saved my life twice. You fought for me then, why against me now?"

He answered sadly, "I am not fighting against you, Gloria. Some day you will know it, but not from me."

Gloria went out sadly and Royce indulged in a little delirium of his own, cursing his luck in managing always to have his devotion misunderstood. He was glad that Lois repented her liaison with Frenau, but he wished that she had chosen some other person for father confessor or some other time to call.

In the majestic blue dining room of the Bankers' club, Gloria found Casimir already installed. Pierpont's influence had secured the engagement for him and money had provided the neat costume that changed Casimir almost as much as Stas had been changed. The captain waiter placed a cushion on a chair for Stas and motioned Casimir to lift him into it. Casimir had not yet recognized his own boy, disguised as he was with a bath and rich men's clothes. But Stas recognized his father and hugged him with vigor to the amazement of Aunt Hortensia, who had been invited to the luncheon so that she and Pierpont might agree on some new interest for Gloria. They agreed to postpone the task till after luncheon. By that time Gloria had

he was ideal. So Gloria dashed away with Casimir and Stas, while Hortensia and Pierpont held up their hands in despair of her.

When Gloria's chauffeur and footman heard the address she gave them they thought they had misunderstood. She repeated it in most positive tones. They raised their eyebrows in a way that indicated, "What next?"

Coincidences do happen now and then in real life—not quite so often or so gracefully as in fiction, and yet once in a while. In fact, coincidences make life what it is. And so it chanced that the murderer of Dick Frenau whom Gloria had followed from the night court had found a hiding place in the same block where Casimir lived.

Gloria recognized the region as soon as her limousine turned into it. She recognized the saloon and dance hall where she had found and lost her man. But she did not recognize the murderer's daughter in the crowd that gathered about the unusual limousine when it drew up along the garbage cans.

Nell Trask was looking for her father, and she paused to see the fine lady descending from the palace car. In Nell's arms was the child of Richard Frenau, a beautiful creature like its father, Gloria, hurrying through the crowd, could not help pausing to admire the baby and to tweak the little finger it upheld. There for a moment the two women paused with Dick Frenau's child between them; and neither dreamed that the other had ever heard of him. Gloria passed on into the tenement and Nell went to seek her father.

When Gloria was led up and up a gloomy staircase to the one dismal, barren room which Casimir and his wife and their child had had to call home, she felt that she had no right to complain of any woes that had befallen her.

The sick mother was outstretched on an old bed by a dark window. A neighbor's wife, who introduced herself as "Mrs. Slattery, thank you kindly," was sitting by "Mrs. Casimir ran to his wife, and gasping with terror at her appearance, dropped on his knees. She embraced him with long white arms so gaunt that they frightened Gloria. Stas ran to the other side of the bed and clambered up. His mother turned, stared at him, and only realized after a long look that he was hers. Then she gathered him to her poor bosom with a sob of pitiful rapture.

Mrs. Slattery rubbed off a chair with her apron and invited Gloria to rest herself, but Gloria went to Casimir's wife. The wretched woman clutched her hands and held them to her cheek, while Stas and Casimir both explained to her who Gloria was. They told her what miracles Gloria had performed and they plainly hoped for another, but Gloria was filled with a dread that money would be useless here. She promised glibly, but her heart felt helpless.

Doctor Royce came at last and she had some hope that he might redeem the life of the victim of life. He made his examination and spoke cheerfully enough, but Gloria was sure from his tone that he was lying, too. She led him out into the hall to question him. He shook his head gloomily. Gloria protested.

"But surely there must be some way to help her!"

"Not in this cavern," Doctor Royce insisted. "Of course if she were in the country somewhere—in the air under the sky—but what chance has she of that?"

That was so easy that Gloria laughed aloud. "Oh, if that is all, I'll furnish the air and the sky. I'll take them all up to our country place at once. You get them ready. I'll go tell my father that we are expecting guests."

"But what will he say to—"

"What does it matter what he says?" said Gloria as she ran back into the dingy hall to scatter good news like flowers. She ordered Royce to attend to the details of transportation and hurried away to inform her father that she had invited three strangers to his country estate. Gloria's feet skipped down the stairway and she was humming as she stepped into the limousine and told the footman, "The office!"

The car started and was checked almost at once by a tangle of trucks. Gloria, looking about impatiently, caught sight of Nell Trask and her father just leaving the opposite tenement. She recognized the old man. She was dumfounded. As she gazed, they were lost in the crowd. She saw that the car could not be turned around. Every moment was precious. Impulse told her not to lose this precious chance. She obeyed impulse.

Without pausing to inform the chauffeur, Gloria opened the door, dropped out, and ran after the Trasks. She picked them up again after a while. She saw a policeman. She resolved to order him to arrest the criminal. As she hesitated, she saw Trask stop and tenderly relieve the weary Nell of her baby's weight. He fondled and nuzzled the child and laughed with a grandfatherly foolishness. Gloria turned away from the policeman.

She followed at a little distance, wondering what to do. The best thing would be, she felt, to find out where he lived. She followed for blocks. The Trasks climbed the stairs of the elevated. Gloria went up after them. She took the next car on the same train. It seemed that they would ride on forever. Far uptown they got out. Gloria got out. She trailed them at a greater distance now because the streets were sparsely populated. The street sloped sharply down to the river. Moored to the wharves where a number of huge, cumbersome barges. To one of these the Trasks clambered. They went down into it through a cabin door.

Gloria was in a plight. She had traced her fugitive to his home. But his home was about to move. A tough-looking tugboat with a tough-looking crew was already fastening a towline to the barge. There was too policeman in sight anywhere. The men loitering about the barges did not appeal to Gloria as desirable Samaritans to ask for help.

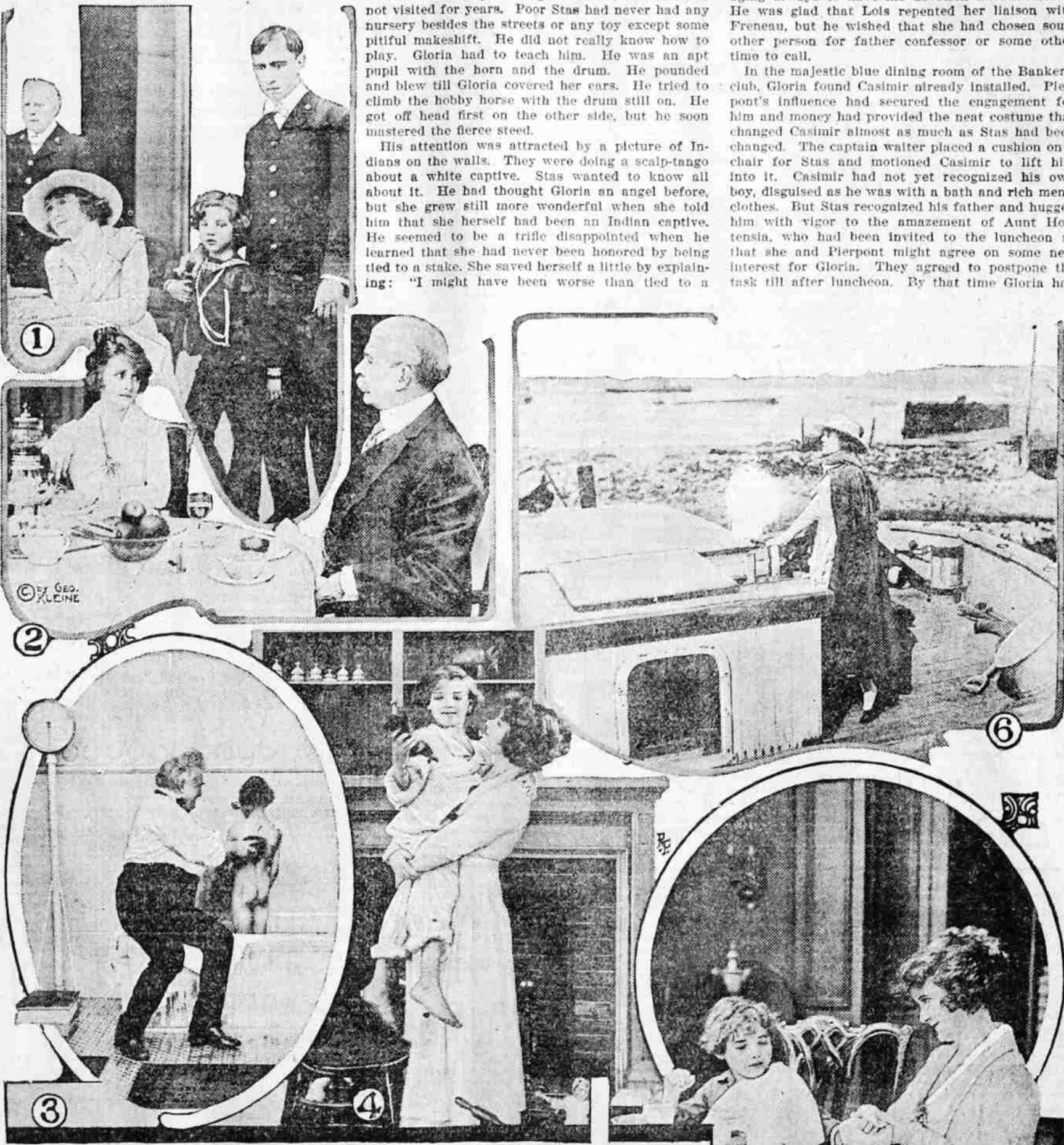
Another of Gloria's impulses stirred her feet almost against her will. She ran along the wharf, crossed a plank to the Trask barge, and went to the cabin hatchway. She heard voices of anger coming up. The girl was upbraiding her father for deserting her and accusing him of a further crime. She was crying hysterically.

"You killed him. He is dead and you killed him."

The old man denied the charge with frenzy. He laughed at it, swore that he was innocent. The girl was already persuaded and this so enraged Gloria that she darted down the steps and cried out at Trask:

"You did kill him. I saw you."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



- 1-Casimir Was Evidently Suffering a Great Emotional Strain.
- 2-"Thank Heaven, Nobody Knows of Your Escape."
- 3-Old Griggs Gives Stas a Bath.
- 4-He Did Not Really Know How to Play.
- 5-She Washed the Child's Hands in the Finger Bowls.
- 6-She Heard Voices of Anger Coming Up.

only to learn that it would take three weeks to make the boy's clothes. He could not possibly wait! She banged the receiver on the hook and ran through the telephone book till she found the number of a large men's furnishing establishment. A dainty gentleman answered the telephone. His voice revealed awe, then delight, when he learned who was addressing him.

"Send me several of everything a boy has to have," Gloria demanded. When the clerk ventured to ask what his measurements were Gloria answered, "Measurements? How do I know? Do you have to have them?"

When he said that he did, Gloria called for her maid, a pencil, a tape measure, a piece of paper, and ran to the servant's quarters. She was about to enter one of the doors when she caught a glimpse that made her retreat.

Old Griggs, with coat off, sleeves rolled up, and a towel for apron, was just lowering the boy into the steaming water. He dropped the boy with a splash and, whirling, flung himself against the door. He spoke through it in a shocked manner, motioning the boy to hide in the suds. Gloria explained, Griggs opened the door a little and clutched the tape measure. He took the boy's dimensions and called them out to Gloria, who repeated them to her secretary-maid. Griggs had to thrust his arms into the water two or three times to reach the

stake if I hadn't been rescued by Mr. Fre—I mean, Doctor Royce."

Then she fell into such a deep meditation that Stas could hardly recall her to finish the story. It was not yet ended when the butler and the second man marched in with two towers of pasteboard boxes—Stas' trousseau had arrived.

Now there was excitement, indeed, and Gloria and Stas forgot the mere Indians in the thrill of dressing and being dressed. Gloria began to fear that she had adopted a hopeless fop when she saw how Stas strutted in his finery. In his knickers and frilled shirt, his starched collar, silk tie, patent leather shoes, and derby hat, he looked like a pocket Beau Brummel. And then her rapture turned to alarm. The boy began to cough, to turn red and purple in the face, and to shake with paroxysms.

"O, dear! O, dear!" Gloria moaned; "he's had a bath, and it's given him pneumonia. The doctor! Quick, I must get him to the doctor!"

Dr. Stephen Royce was trying to practice the proverb, "Physician, heal thyself." He was dressing the wounds of battle he had received the night before in Gloria's defense. He was plastering his fist and approving it for its good work when a caller was announced. It was Lois Stafford. She had repented of her affair with the dead Frenau and was trying to live it down. Idleness was both temptation and distress. She wanted to know if there was not some work she could do. Royce told her that there were always poor people in plenty, and lonely sick. He gave her the address of some of his patients who would never pay, but whom he treated with none the less care.

As she was leaving she met Gloria coming in with the boy. Royce was disgusted because Gloria looked angry. He should have been delighted at the hint of possible jealousy. Gloria coldly in-